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Another View of Viet Nam

CPYRGHT

AN OFFICIAL of the CIA has recently written concerning the Viet Nam situation that:

"There remains serious doubt that victory can be won and the situation remains very fragile. If large scale U.S. support continues and if further political deterioration within South Viet Nam is prevented, at least a prolonged stalemate can be attained.

"There is also a chance that political evolution within the country and developments upon the world scene could lead to some kind of negotiated settlement based upon neutralization."

So stated Willard Matthias, a member of the CIA's 112-man Board of National Estimates. The statements were contained in the group's June report on world trends.

Government sources made the Matthias report available to newsmen but stated that his findings do not represent the

government's point of view. It was stated that the United States was fully committed to stemming the Viet Cong insurgents and still believed that it could be done. It was further stated that there was no ground for negotiation with the Communists of South Viet Nam at the present time.

The possibility of some sort of neutralization as an alternative to the present situation in Viet Nam has long been a viable subject for discussion among European allies of the United States.

Despite the government's strong statement regarding the U.S. position in Viet Nam, it is interesting to speculate concerning what purpose could be served by the release of the Matthias study. One possibility is that it might be intended as a trial balloon, designed to sample current public feeling regarding the Viet Nam situation.